



## Yosemite Lodge Area Redevelopment Environmental Assessment Indian Cultural Center

### What is this project about?

In keeping with the *General Management Plan*, the National Park Service entered into a cooperative agreement with the American Indian Council of Mariposa County (Southern Sierra Miwok) in 1997 to work together to establish an Indian Cultural Center at the site of the last historically occupied Indian village in Yosemite Valley, just west of the Camp 4 walk-in campground. This center will provide a location for these American Indian people to conduct traditional ceremonies and functions and to practice and teach traditional lifeways. This cultural center will not replace the primary educational function of the current Indian Village of Ahwahnee at Yosemite Village.

### What is happening now on this project?

A conceptual design was prepared by the Indian Council of Mariposa County with a grant provided by The Yosemite Fund. A preliminary site design and analysis was performed earlier in 2002, and a final site concept presentation was made by the Council to the National Park Service in August 2002. Upcoming environmental compliance for this project (funded by the National Park Service) will consist of an environmental assessment that will analyze potential impacts of this facility. Cost for construction of the Indian Cultural Center will be the responsibility of the American Indian Council of Mariposa County. Construction is expected to begin upon the completion of fund raising.

### What does this project include?

The project is designed with two major components—a traditional village and a modern community building. The traditional structures will be built by Indian Council members and volunteers. Design for the modern structures and improvements will be completed by the National Park Service by May 2003.

#### The Indian Cultural Center will encompass the following elements.

- Facilities will consist of structures and landscape features typical of an Indian village from the mid- to late-19th century. One large, partly subterranean ceremonial roundhouse and a smaller sweatlodge will be constructed. Approximately 15 cedar bark *umachas* (conical houses) will be built in the vicinity of the roundhouse and sweatlodge. Plants important for food, basketry, and medicinal uses may be grown. Existing archeological features, such as mortar rocks, will remain in place and be incorporated into the village design.
- The last existing structure from the original village (a small cabin currently being used as a National Park Service office) will be moved back to the village and used as the cultural center office.
- A new kitchen and restroom facility will be constructed in conjunction with the community center.
- Utilities (water, sewer, propane, road access, and electrical service) will be provided.
- Screening will be established where necessary to visually separate the cultural center and Northside Drive, Yosemite Lodge, Camp 4, and the Valley Loop Trail. The Valley Loop Trail may be relocated to a route south of the cultural center to minimize intrusions. Overnight parking for scheduled activities will be provided at the Indian Cultural Center or other administrative areas.

## Public Participation

Public participation in the planning process is critical. Here are some ways to stay involved in the Yosemite Lodge Area Redevelopment:

- The public is encouraged to submit comments and concerns related to the site designs on the four projects included in the Yosemite Lodge Area Redevelopment. Please note that the decisions made in the *Yosemite Valley Plan* will not be revisited. The environmental assessment will analyze the specific details relating to design and construction of the Indian Cultural Center. **Comments must be received in writing no later than October 26, 2002.**
- Watch the park's planning web site ([www.nps.gov/yose/planning](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning)) for more information as the planning process for this project gets underway. The public is now invited to submit written comments to help the project team identify issues and concerns regarding the Indian Cultural Center project. In the future, these comments will be used in the development of an environmental assessment.
- When the Yosemite Lodge Area Redevelopment Environmental Assessment is completed, the public will be allowed to review and provide comment on the document.
- Add your name to the park's planning mailing list (to address/fax/email below) and receive the *Planning Update* newsletter as well as other planning - related notices.

All comments must be submitted in writing to be considered and will be accepted in the following ways:

Mail: Superintendent  
Attn: Yosemite Lodge Area Redevelopment  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax: 209/379- 1294

Email: [Yose\\_Planning@nps.gov](mailto:Yose_Planning@nps.gov)

The status of this and other Yosemite National Park improvement projects will be periodically updated on the park's planning web site. Visit online: [www.nps.gov/yose/planning](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning).